

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0028] with the following amended paragraph:

[0028] The bottom component 46 is preferably substantially U-shaped, as shown, and preferably includes a first and second horizontal component 45, 47 and a connecting piece 48. (Alternatively, the bottom component 46' can have the profile exemplified in Figure 9, wherein the bottom component 46' has only one horizontal component 45' which is connected to the angle component 44 and the flashing element 50.) The bottom component 46 aids in positioning the siding panel 60, as the siding panel is preferably installed with the panel's bottom surface 64 flush against the first horizontal component 45. The first horizontal component acts as a support for the siding panel. The first and second horizontal components 45 (or 45'), 47 of the bottom component 46 (or 46') also preferably includes at least one drain opening 41-51 for facilitating the drainage of water that runs down the siding panel 60. Preferably these drainage openings 41-51 are approximately 3/32 in diameter and are positioned approximately every six inches along the length of the first and second horizontal components.